

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present Amendment is responsive to the final Office Action mailed February 25, 2008 in the above-identified application.

Claims 3 and 4 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and new claims 15-17 are added. Therefore, claims 1-2, 5-8 and 10-17 are the claims currently pending in the present application.

Claims 1, 2, 5-8 and 10-13 are amended to clarify features recited thereby.

Applicant's Statement of Substance of Interview

Interview record Ok
11/10/08
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Applicant thanks Examiners Nahid Amiri and Daniel Stodola for the opportunity of a telephone interview conducted on July 3, 2008. During the interview, applicant's representative, George Brieger, explained aspects of applicant's invention as claimed in claim 1 with reference to Figs. 1 and 2 of the Drawings. Further, applicant's representative pointed out points of distinction over the McManigal reference, including that McManigal does not disclose or suggest that the first end surface of the flange is concave in the radial direction over an area that is subjected to deformation in the assembled state. Various possible amendments to the claims were discussed. No agreement was reached. The foregoing will serve as applicant's Statement of the Substance of the Interview.

Objection to Claim 11

Claim 11 is objected to on the ground that the term "the flanged member" should be changed to "one of the flanged members." Claim 11 is amended.

Rejection of Claims 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite on the ground that the term "said first end surface" recited in claim 11 allegedly lacks sufficient antecedent basis. Claim 11 is amended.

Rejection of Claims 1-5 and 10-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5 and 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious from McManigal, U.S. Patent No. 5,040,714. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.